



An appeal for mercy, compassion and justice  
in the Middle East and throughout the world

*The Executive Committee of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, meeting on August 25, 2014, in Quebec City, issues the following appeal:*

In the name of the Father of life, and of the Crucified Christ, and of the Spirit of love, we make this appeal for mercy, compassion and justice.

We hear resounding about us still the question that God, Father of all life, posed to humanity at the beginning: “Where is your brother?” We see the homeless and the wounded of the Middle East: in Iraq, Syria and the Holy Land. We hear their cries in Ukraine and in parts of Africa. We observe the persecutions and hardships that hundreds of thousands of people today endure because of their faith and convictions – Catholics, Orthodox, Protestants, Jews, Muslims, members of other religions as well as ethnic minorities. The horrors of war and violence are ravaging so many innocent hearts. Families and children are left without water, food, aid and shelter. Homes and communities are being destroyed. Not only is the future at risk for the people of these regions, but international security itself is in peril. War and violence are again eroding the common bonds of humanity, fragmenting the human family. It is Jesus who is being persecuted, who is homeless, who is hungry, who is in prison, who is being tortured.

As followers of the Crucified One, we recognize particularly in the Middle East the sufferings of our own brothers and sisters in faith. Moved by their pains and afflictions, we make their cause our own. We are united with them in solidarity and faith. Our unceasing prayer and hope are rooted in the love and forgiveness by which Our Lord transforms the human heart. Our one comfort is in the concern and care that people around the world are offering. Encouraged by the calls of Pope Francis for peace and justice, we echo the statements and actions of the leaders of the Catholic and Orthodox Churches of the Middle East. We make our appeal to all people – of every faith and in the name of good will, here in Canada and around the world – to do even more to assist the suffering of those in need.

We pray that the Holy Spirit continue to inspire Canadians, particularly the faithful of our Catholic Church, to support the work of agencies that bring solace and aid to the persecuted and the exiled. We pray too that the transforming power of the Spirit inspire political, religious and community leaders, in each of the troubled regions of our world, to speak out loudly for justice and reconciliation, to denounce atrocities, to renounce violence and oppression, to announce and demand peace.

“Let me hear what God the Lord will speak, for he will speak peace to his people and to his faithful...” (Psalm 85.8)

+ Paul-André Durocher  
Archbishop of Gatineau  
President

+ Douglas Crosby, O.M.I.  
Bishop of Hamilton  
Vice President

+ Lionel Gendron, P.S.S.  
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